

# Hashtags: Social Media Community Information Dissemination Ultimate Tools

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Received: April 20, 2022

Accepted: June 1, 2022

Published: June 24, 2022

doi:10.5296/ifb.v9i1.20016

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ifb.v9i1.20016>

## Abstract

We often hear about the online battles between social media users on contradictory beliefs, advocacy, events feedback and petty viral arguments. They show their solidarity through the use of hashtags (#), that allow them to spread news quickly and keep-it up dated. This article explores the concept of a social tagging or commonly known as hashtags in social media platforms, which supports, knowledge exchange, research, and networking opportunities for the social media community. Creating content is one of the virtues in social media platforms to advocate awareness among its users and followers. Past researchers of the study are discussed exponentially to provide a holistic view. Challenges faced by the social media users and social media platform providers are also mentioned in this paper.

**Keywords:** social media literacy, social media community, social tagging, social metadata, hashtags

## 1. Introduction

This paper describes an academic library's approach to building community through Twitter.

Much of the literature offers guidance to libraries on approaches to using social media as a marketing tool. The research presented here reframes that conversation to explore the role of social media as it relates to building community. The researchers' university library formed a social media group and implemented a social media guide to bring an intentional, personality-rich, and interaction-driven approach to its social media activity. Quantitative analyses reveal a significant shift and increase in Twitter follower population and interactions, and suggest promising opportunities for social media to strengthen the library's ties with academic communities.

Society organizations are getting more instrumented, thus creating and storing massive amounts of data. Managing and extracting insights from generated data is a challenge and a key to competitive advantage. Structured data can ensure optimal relevance for more effective decision-making and to stay in the loop of updated news. An enormous quantity of data can be collected and analysed with the evolution of communication technology such as smartphones and cloud computing. There are numerous alternatives for evaluating social media data with an excess of complexity, and the never-ending accumulation of data. Specificity on a subject may be easily obtained when the user is social media literate and has the ability to navigate through mountains of material to get to the important point. One of the simplest ways to navigate social media data is to follow through pound tags or hashtags where the topic matters are denoted by # indications. This is a tremendous advancement in how information and other social media content can be discovered, as the programmes will collocate the phrases into a result listing for social media users to view. In recent years, the concept of spreading content has gone viral, making more than half of total population using social media for more than just reading the news. To attract attention, powerful phrases and sensory elements are used in headlines, with the intention that it will spread and reach as many followers, users, or viewers as possible.

When a content is issued online whether it is a summary, title, or featured images are pre-programmed for the use in analysis, assessment, and commercial search engine optimisation. Additionally, the notions of incorporating data into sources, such as assigning hashtags to content, are used to keep the audience informed about events related to the topic of interest. Social metadata is a mechanism to provide content that is not visible to your audience but is picked up by other services like web crawlers and other search engine optimization tools. (Kho & Ksanicky, 2015).

A hashtag is a type of tagging that begins with the symbol #, also known as inheritance of the characteristic of metadata. Chris Messina (2007) encouraged the usage of hashtags in a tweet for the first time. Hashtags are a type of labelling done by the social media users that allows people to orientating content or share a subject or theme on microblogging and photo-sharing sites like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. (Chang & Iyer, 2012).

In addition to a hashtag's feature, A hashtag should indeed begin with a hash (#) character, then include further characters, and then finish with a space or the message's conclusion. The # may need to be followed by a space on some systems. Most hashtag-accepting systems allow you to use letters without punctuation, numerals, and underscores. Hashtags are not case sensitive (a search for "#hashtag" returns "#Hashtag"), but by using engrained caps (for example, CleftCutie) will enhances readability and accessibility. According to Wikström (2014), hashtags can be used to provide circumstantial surrounding a message without the goal of categorizing it for future search, sharing, or other purposes. As a result, hashtags may function as a self-generated metadata that is customized to various social media platforms' needs.

Caleffi (2015) suggests the usage of hashtags is to provide context or deepness to the data or content that appears with the hashtag. It's also possible to utilise the hashtag to communicate one's own particular sentiments and emotions. This is one of the reasons why there are millions of hashtags on social media platforms, and social media users who have a same interest or belong to a certain group are the ones who make a hashtag popular and trendy.

## **2. Social Media Hashtags Usage**

Hashtag in Twitter, is not similar to be like any other computer-mediated communication (CMC) such as email, IM (instant messaging), blogging, and SMS text-messaging, which has gotten a lot of attention from social media. The content leans toward techniques that may be loosely defined as socially accepted and a tendency for big data complexity, thus hashtags trend quicker on Twitter platforms (Reyna, N. S et al 2022).

There are studies that focus on frequency mapping of the topological structure of social networks in terms of who "follows" or "mentions" someone, how communities of sorts emerge around certain popular users, and so forth ( Weng, Lim, Jiang, & He 2010; Wu, Hofman, Mason, & Watts 2011; Murthy 2011; Murthy& Longwell, 2013).

Another well-known goal of naming a hashtag is to use it to disseminate information throughout social media platforms. Hashtags developed for argument, such as #kitajagakita instead of #malaysia or #malaysian, employ different vocabulary to avoid getting dragged into wider debates on related topics. However, because people frequently use many spellings or phrases to refer to the same topic, ideas may find it difficult to become "hot topics."

The usage of hashtags on Facebook appears to be increasing. This might be due to the fact that users can now link their Instagram, Twitter and Facebook accounts and cross-post to both platforms. Other mediums have shown how effective hashtags can be. If hashtags are effective elsewhere, they should likewise be effective on Facebook, logic argues. In Facebook, hashtags alter subjects and phrases into clickable links in your profile or Page postings. When consumers click or search for a hashtag, they will see results that include the hashtag, allowing them to learn more about issues that interest them.



Figure 1. Snapshot from Facebook hashtags result for #kitajakita

### 3. Communities Hashtags in Social Media

If a business or a person want to 'stand' out, but also wants to 'stand' in and be a member of that community, staying in the loop of discussion is important. Contribution of hashtags usage in relevant communities are made to connect, participate, and get your content viewed and stand out by building your brand voice to break through the clutter of social content can be done by using hashtags that can carry as far as it goes depending on how well distributed and reachable the content is. When the information is unique, such as internal communications, campaigns, events, or personal brand content, creating new hashtags may be incredibly beneficial for developing a private community or campaign tracking. It is far preferable to use existing community hashtags to reach and interact with more relevant individuals for use cases such as social selling, thought leadership, account-based marketing, and employee advocacy, seeing that if it used for business purposes.

Employee engagement is not the same as, say, social selling. Creating an intentional echo-chamber (a safe cloud-based space) in which you utilise employee hashtags to boost employee engagement is a fantastic technique. Twitter and Instagram, in particular, have a well-developed hashtag strategy for listening, community, and interaction. This have shown that the usage of hashtags has been acknowledge for its ability to disseminate information strategically. Twitter has a significant capability for targeting diverse publics and issues of interest. This is because of the nature of twitter that serves the users a snippet of the story and spur curiosity of user to follow. There has been a significant paradigm shift with these capabilities, where political parties are developing their candidates as political brands in the digital arena (Guzmán, Paswan, & Steenburg, 2015; Nielsen, 2015). LinkedIn, on the other hand, is a much younger platform. B2B buyers on LinkedIn are still not utilising hashtags for search, and when they do, they seldom dig into the conversation and follow the hashtags. There are diverse used of hashtags other than the prime objectives of it to become the tools of dissemination, it's also used and included into the flow of strategy and an element added of online business model.

The prevalent concept of brand co-creation implies that the brand's identity is determined by the dynamic interactions of users in multiple, overlapped brand communities (Brodie et al., 2013; Michel, 2017; Orth & Rose, 2017). The brand itself must engage in interactions with users and encourage interactions between users regarding multiple themes so that the brand identity is socially enacted while maintaining control over the intended brand identity (Habibi, et. al, 2014). The dialogical viewpoint contradicts the existing state of the art in terms of Twitter use by politicians and citizens. Many studies have found highly homophilic networks (Maruyama, Suthers, & Robertson, 2014; Guerrero-Solé, 2014 & 2017) in which users rarely interact (retweet or mention) with non-likeminded users but cluster around similar brand topics (Maruyama, Suthers, & Robertson, 2014; Smith et al., 2014).

#### **4. Advantages of Hashtags Usage**

The benefits of using proper and exact keywords in social media content searches are recommended in a research on health information distribution through communication. Keywords, similar to hashtags, will aid in communication. With this concept in hand, many researchers, information specialists, and social media community members are constantly updating themselves to ensure that accurate tracking of life-altering facts and analyses of social media updates are disseminated within the community and that proper information or material is legitimate and approved.

In order to maximise delivery of information in social media material, language is critical. A good language, such as English, is essential for communicating, as it taps into people's thoughts while avoiding functional words and phrases. It will be more effective in terms of advertising and brand KPIs like supported brand alertness, ad consciousness, and product awareness. (Afyouni, et al., 2015). However, if the topic is worldwide news, it is linked back to the demographic target of the material (Malaysian language is Malay), and they may also be widely distributed abroad in various social media platforms, thus accepted worldwide.

Communities that utilise social media to organise special events like parades, webinars, and awareness campaigns will obviously profit from the usage of hashtags, that also allow community members to participate actively in any updates. The common codes and circumvention tactics that users may utilise can be used to assess the importance of hashtag usage. Because untagged content is more difficult to discover, platforms employ hashtags to limit undesirable contributions. Hashtags have become vital in social media communication, linking people who don't have a follower or lower connection to share material (Schmidt, 2014). Twitter and the emergence of personal publics are also significant since they will shape the flow of the trending conveyed in order to attract readers, followers, and subscribers.

Social media community have been given a great opportunity to utilise hashtags in order to stay up to speed on what's new and share comparable material of mutual interest. Another benefit is the engagement gained on social media platforms as a result of common user solidarity, which promotes the cohesion of a social media community group's similar interests. To determine whether messaging points are resonating with certain audiences, social metadata or social tagging (also known as hashtag) can be employed. These messages might then be used in future advocacy campaigns to reinforce key concepts and promote more contact and participation with the subject. If a hashtag fails to generate interest in the organisation, cause, or campaign on social media, it is believed that it may be removed and replaced with one that will.

The recent disease that force the world to lock down through the year 2020 to 2021 has shown that such unplanned disruptions, which raise health and safety issues, result in the cancellation of scheduled medical gatherings, conferences, and training courses (Phillips, et al. 2020). Such circumstances have reignited curiosity in creating a virtual web-based platform to alleviate the stress of being incapable to attend these educational affairs in person. Social media platforms might be a good place to keep promoting the educational element to the rest of the social media user base, or the targeted audience thus, hashtags usage have become tremendously popular and accepted as part of the searching as well as publishing content in the internet.

Individuals now have a plethora of possibilities to share their opinions and have them heard by thousands of individuals thanks to the rising availability of social media. Massive amounts of raw data are produced by a combination of user behaviours for instance the influencers that trending and most likely to be followed, a famous affair of celebrities, sharing opinion with vast perspectives to a topic, and commentary of those (Afyouni, et al., 2015). Their initial purpose and curiosity, as well as their desire to educate oneself, may be projected if they were aware of hashtag usage. It also assures that they have a huge network in the community's bubble with a variety of specialists that can provide explanations, check contents and postings, or supply one. With this, the individuals with the most expertise and experience arms with the literacy of social metadata will become the advocate to themselves as well as referee to others in creating the social nation.

By simply following the hashtags used, identification of topic that spark common interest and clash of opinions and this discover important influencers in the business by monitoring and

analysing social media content for themes of interest. #employeeadvocacy has 3,739 Twitter followers and 1,291 LinkedIn followers in marketing, whereas #B2BMarketing has 15,125 Twitter followers and 33,760 LinkedIn followers, so if #employeeadvocacy is used alone, it may not reach those marketers who work in B2BMarketing and are interested in employee advocacy. It's unsurprising that fresh information will emerge from hashtags and discussions on social media sites. It's a place full of unintentional learning, where every social media user will almost certainly learn something new. These facts are corroborated by previous pandemic occurrences over the last two years, in which the pandemic saw the connection of sources to the spread of data via social media channels (He, Wang & Akula, 2017). Businesses that embarks the online journey are not usually forced into it but the needs of techno savvy customers persuade the company to look into the wider opportunity provided by the social media platforms.

This introduces a new means of looking for information and material in social media, and hash tagging generate a plethora of knowledge possibilities that might link and educate social media users indirectly and fostering healthier digital citizenship in the future. Hashtags are thought to facilitate network contacts, hence assisting in the development of a professional and educated social media country that benefits people all over the world.

## 5. Conclusion

Hashtags usage have become the norm for any social media users to keep abreast of what is happening around them, whether within or outside their interests. Hashtags are becoming the ultimate weapon of dissemination in the form of online solidarity in beliefs and advocacy. What started as a collocation and cataloguing information online have become the next best to distribute and disseminate information and content through social media platforms. Best practices of using hashtags will be different for many industries depending on the purposes. To be a hashtags-literate is crucial when using social media platforms for businesses and campaigns so as to welcome variances of opinions and healthy debates that are open and authentic. Social media users tend to be more vocal and braver, masking (or unmask) themselves to treat the social media platforms as a battleground worth fighting and fought about. Information specialists, information providers and information organizations should make a full use of hash tagging to ensure visibility and widen the prospects of becoming popular. It is a great weapon to have when defending and surviving the dynamic changes of information dissemination in the virtual world.

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